

SONOMA VALLEY COUNTY SANITATION DISTRICT **NEWS**

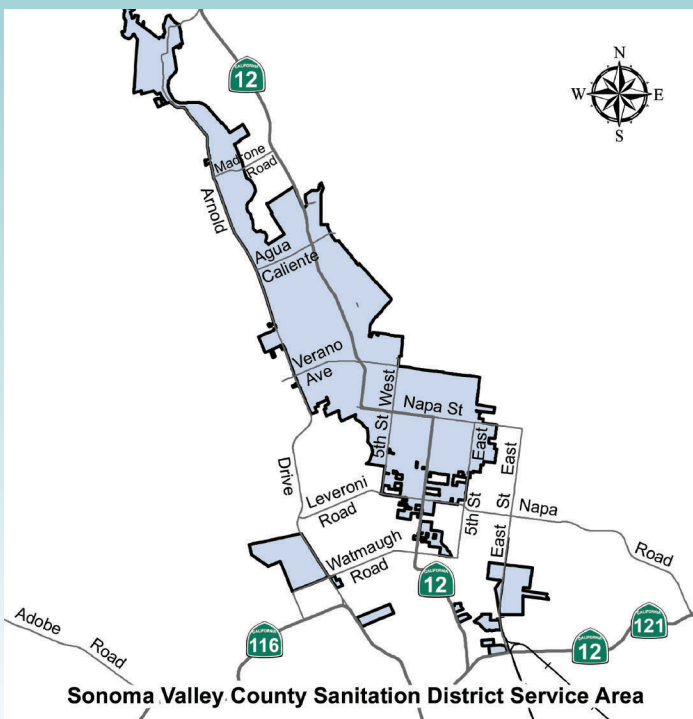
INSIDE FALL 2013

- 2 How to Contact Your Board
- 3 Employee Spotlight
- 4 Volume-Based Rate Structure
- 5 High-Efficiency Program
- 6 Watch What You Flush
- 6 FOG



The Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District concluded construction this fall on the Napa Salt Marsh Restoration Pipeline Project. For more information, see page 2.

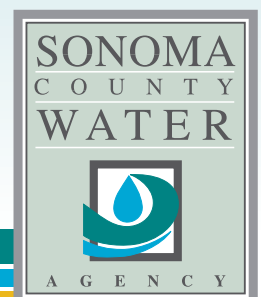
About Your Sanitation District



During a 1995 restructuring of the Sonoma County government, the Sonoma County Water Agency (Water Agency) assumed responsibility for managing and operating 11 different sanitation districts and zones. Currently the Water Agency manages and operates eight different sanitation districts and zones throughout Sonoma County, including the Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District (District).

The District began operations in 1953. Currently, its service recipients number 17,027 Equivalent Single-Family Dwellings within a 4,500-acre service area. The treatment plant has a design capacity of 3 million gallons per day (average daily dry weather flow) and treats wastewater to tertiary treatment levels (also referred to as advanced water treatment). High-quality tertiary treated recycled water is an important source of water and its use offsets potable water demands.

Between May 1 and October 31, the recycled water is used for irrigation. Between November 1 and April 30, recycled water is discharged into Schell Slough or Hudeman Slough. ●



www.sonomacountywater.org/SVCSD

Pipeline to Supply Recycled Water for Napa Salt Marsh Restoration

Construction concluded this fall on the District's Napa Salt Marsh Restoration Pipeline Project (Project) to restore approximately 640 acres of former salt ponds to tidal habitat by providing recycled water to desalinate the existing ponds.

The Project is a salinity reduction and habitat restoration project on the Napa River Unit of the Napa-Sonoma Marshes State Wildlife Area, which is owned by the California Wildlife Conservation Board and managed by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), in Napa, Sonoma and Solano Counties.

Approximately three and one-half miles of pipeline was constructed to deliver tertiary-treated recycled water from the existing District recycled water pipeline to the salt ponds.

Desalination of the bittern ponds is anticipated to take between 10 and 15 years depending on the volume of freshwater available.



Following the desalination of the bittern ponds, the recycled water from the District's Treatment Plant would be used for agricultural irrigation adjacent to the pipeline alignment and potentially for maintenance of freshwater wetlands in the area if desired by the CDFW.

For more information contact Kevin Booker, Principal Engineer, at Kevin.Booker@scwa.ca.gov. ●

Compliance with Public Health, Environmental Regulations

Wide-ranging regulatory standards to protect public health and the environment are set by the California State Water Resources Control Board and in turn implemented through the Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCB).

The District operates under a unique, individualized permit from the San Francisco Bay RWQCB that sets the requirements for wastewater operations and recycled water use. Complying with these often-costly regulations result in District capital improvement projects and increased rates.

For more information about the California Water Boards, go to this website link: www.waterboards.ca.gov. ●

Stormwater Inflow

"Stormwater inflow" is a term that refers to excessive rainwater, especially occurring during heavy storms. When stormwater enters the wastewater system, it must be treated like sanitary waste, resulting in higher treatment costs. Also, sewer backups and overflows that harm the environment may occur.

You can help prevent stormwater inflow by inspecting roof gutters and downspouts. Disconnect them if they are connected to the sewer system. Instead, direct downspouts onto yards and gardens. Also, please report loose manhole covers by calling the Water Agency's 24-hour emergency hotline at 707.523.1070. ●

How to Contact Your Board

The District Board of Directors is composed of the three people who hold these elected positions: the Mayor, City of Sonoma and the Chair and First District Supervisor, Sonoma County Board of Supervisors/Water Agency.

Your District Board members and their contacts include the following:

- City of Sonoma Mayor Ken Brown – Ken@bearflagsocialclub.com or 707.938.8623
- First District Supervisor/Director Susan Gorin – Susan.Gorin@sonoma-county.org or 707.565.2241
- Chair of the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors/Water Agency David Rabbitt – David.Rabbitt@sonoma-county.org or 707.565.2241

Employee Spotlight: Plant Operator Enjoys Responsibility of Job Duties

Ryan Hall is a native of Sonoma who has worked for one and one-half years as a plant operator at the Water Agency.

One part of a 14-member operator team, Ryan has earned and maintained the required Grade 2 wastewater certification and Grade T2 drinking water license to work at the Water Agency in its dual role of providing both drinking water and wastewater services.



In a partial lineup of his job duties, he listed operating the water and wastewater pumps, valves, controls and other equipment and collecting water and wastewater samples for lab testing. “There is the day in, day out of regular operations,” he said with “a lot of responsibility at all locations.” ●

Draft Salt and Nutrient Management Plan to Comply with State Recycled Water Policy

Called key to integrated water management, a draft Salt and Nutrient Management Plan (SNMP) has been developed by the District in a collaborative process using community involvement through the Sonoma Valley Groundwater Management Program’s existing stakeholder groups. The SNMP will provide an ongoing groundwater quality monitoring and reporting program to track future water quality trends.

The draft SNMP will promote local sustainable water sources and manage salts and nutrients to ensure water quality objectives are met and beneficial uses of groundwater are protected in the Sonoma Valley. An open house on the draft SNMP was held July 18 in Sonoma.

In 2009, the State Water Resources Control Board established the Recycled Water Policy, requiring local water and wastewater entities to collaborate with stakeholders to develop a SNMP for each groundwater basin in California.

The draft SNMP found that overall groundwater quality within the Sonoma Valley is good, although high salinity, minerals and other elements are present in localized areas. The SNMP also found that the groundwater basin has the capacity for increasing recycled water use in the future.

Funding for development of the SNMP included \$200,000 from Proposition 84, the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act. The District was able to apply for funding through the Bay Area Integrated Regional Water Management Plan.

After all public comments are considered, the draft SNMP will be submitted to the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board.

The plan requires updates as needed based on major land use changes and new information from groundwater monitoring.

For more information, please contact Kevin Booker, Principal Engineer, at Kevin.Booker@scwa.ca.gov. ●

MAINTENANCE UPDATE:

Successful Arroyo Road Sewer Siphon Repair Project

Sonoma Valley crews removed nearly a cubic yard of gravel that was obstructing and damaging an 8-inch inverted sewer siphon that runs underneath a critical Fryer Creek crossing on Arroyo Way, just downstream of Sonoma Valley Hospital.

To troubleshoot and locate the problem, the inside of the pipeline was videoed with a closed-circuit television camera. The video revealed two significant holes in the pipe. As a result, gravel and infiltration were getting into the line.

To repair the damage, crews used an internal epoxy pipe patch to seal the holes and provide additional structural integrity. ●



Volume-Based Rate Structure Empowers District Customers

A new volume-based rate structure rewards District residential customers who use less water and create less wastewater for treatment. The volume-based rate structure replaced the fixed billing calculation method for residential accounts with connections to both water and sewer.

The fixed rate billing calculation still applies to commercial sewer accounts; residential accounts with a sewer connection but without a water account through Valley of the Moon Water District or City of Sonoma (i.e. on their own well); and residential accounts without an individual water meter (i.e. apartments, condominiums and mobile homes).

The Water Agency describes the residential volume-based rate structure as being similar to a two-layer cake.

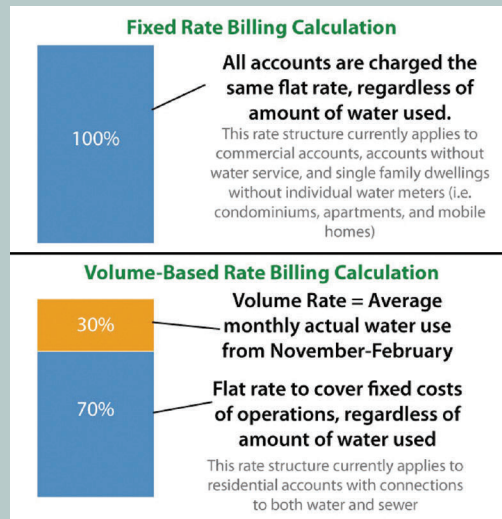
The first layer is the volume charge, which is 30 percent of the total rate and calculated by the average monthly winter water use per household based on specified winter months multiplied by 12 months to derive the annual use. The average winter water use provides an accurate accounting of indoor water use and its impact to the District's treatment facilities because outdoor irrigation should be turned off during the winter months. You'll maximize savings on your sewage bill by avoiding outside

water use during the winter months, such as watering lawns and washing cars. Also, take advantage of District rebate programs (see related story).

The second layer is the fixed charge, which is 70 percent of the total rate. This fixed charge recovers costs that the sewage treatment and collection system incurs regardless of increased or decreased sewage into the system.

Before changing to the volume-based structure, the District conducted a study in 2010, which included extensive public outreach. According to the study results, volume-based rate structures better accounts for household sewer discharge, promote water conservation and provide financial reliability for District services. Also, survey results found that volume-based rates would provide District ratepayers with the opportunity to control a portion of their sewage bill.

In addition to mailing brochures and letters to ratepayers, the District created a web page on the new rate structure at www.sonomacountywater.org/svcscd-rates.



Many surrounding communities (including the cities of Cotati, Healdsburg, Petaluma, Rohnert Park, Santa Rosa, Sebastopol and the Town of Windsor) base their sewer rates on similar volume-based structures.

Ratepayers with questions may contact Michael Gossman, Division Manager - Administrative Services, at 707.521.6207 or Michael.Gossman@scwa.ca.gov. •

Project to Generate Additional Solar Renewable Energy

A photovoltaic system capable of generating approximately 100 kilowatt (kW) of solar renewable energy is proposed for installation at the District wastewater treatment plant. Project funding would be from the Water Agency's Power Fund, which allocated funds for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects.

The new Sonoma Valley Photovoltaic 100 kW project would supplement the plant's existing 928 kW photovoltaic system. While both systems would power the plant, the new project would operate independently of the existing photovoltaic facility.

Construction is planned for Winter 2013/Spring 2014. As planned, the project construction will either be a floating

array on the Reclamation Pond or a ground mounted array of approximately 6,000 square feet adjacent to the existing photovoltaic array.

The project will involve only the minor alteration of existing public facilities along with the construction and installation of small, new equipment and facilities in small structures, including photovoltaic panels, support structures, inverters and associated ancillary structures. In addition, all project work would be conducted within the existing treatment plant facility footprint or within District property.

For more information contact Rebecca Simonson, Engineer III, at 707.524.6435 or Rebecca.Simonson@scwa.ca.gov. •

High-Efficiency Fixture Direct Install Program

The District offers a limited number of high-efficiency fixture retrofits at no cost to all properties with active sewer connections.

The High-Efficiency Fixture Direct Install Program includes:

- Replacement of at least one high-flush toilet (3.5 gallons per flush or more) with a new high-efficiency toilet (1.1 gallons per flush or less) from the list of Qualifying Toilet Models or
- Replacement of at least one urinal (1.0 gallons per flush or more) with a high-efficiency urinal (0.125 gallons per flush or less) from the list of Qualifying Urinal Models.

In addition, the program offers free:

- Replacement of all high-flow faucet aerators with new high-efficiency models (2.0, 1.5 or 0.5 gallons per minute) and



- Replacement of all high-flow showerheads with new high-efficiency models (1.5 gallons per minute).

To participate, you must register your property on the program wait list. Properties will be selected on a first come, first served basis based on funding availability.

For more information or to register, go online to www.sonomacountywater.org/direct-install to sign up on the

waiting list or call the Water Efficiency Program at 707.547.1918. ●

Preparing for Natural Disasters

As Californians, we know that floods, fires and earthquakes are inevitable. The District wants to be sure that service will continue when the next natural disaster occurs. The District is currently assessing potential vulnerabilities that may cause disruption to service and invites the public to participate in this process. For more information, please contact Curran Price at curran.price@scwa.ca.gov or 707.524.1179. ●

Biosolids Management Upgrade to Result in Less Landfill

The District is investing in wastewater dewatered solids infrastructure to ensure that sludge (the organic solid waste material that settles out in the wastewater treatment process) is properly dewatered and disposed for public and environmental benefits. Also, the project will provide new income possibilities and cost-cutting opportunities.

The District's Board of Directors approved the Biosolids Management Upgrade project contract in March of 2013. The \$3 million project will be reimbursed by the State Water Resources Control Board's Clean Water State Revolving Fund as work is completed.

Construction, which is located at the treatment plant, began in May, with an estimated completion date of July 2014.

To upgrade the aging biosolids handling facility, the work includes, but is not limited to, the installation of a new sludge dewatering screw press system and construction of new equipment and load-out building. Work also includes removal of an existing belt press and conveyor; electrical; and preparation and painting of pump room in the existing dewatering building.

The project will result in less material sent to the landfill along with decreased transportation costs and tipping charges



at the landfill. Down the road, it would be possible to produce Class A Biosolids suitable for land application with a future retrofit.

For more information, please contact Brian Anderson, Coordinator, Operations, at Brian.Anderson@scwa.ca.gov. ●

Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District
c/o Sonoma County Water Agency
404 Aviation Blvd.
Santa Rosa CA 95403

PRESORTED STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SANTA ROSA, CA
PERMIT NO. 64

Watch What You Flush

To keep household and community sewer systems operating around the clock with maintenance costs kept to a minimum, your District asks customers to please do not use their toilets as trash cans. To put it as tactfully as possible, human waste and toilet paper should be all that's flushed down the toilet.

Topping the list of the biggest offenders that should never be flushed down the toilet (even if the product's packaging says "flushable" or "disposable") are wet wipes, diapers, dental floss, facial tissues, paper towels, coffee grounds, sanitary products (including plastic tampon applicators), underwear, toys, medicine and medications, makeup, hair, seeds, grease, kitty box litter and cigarette butts.

The Water Agency and other partners sponsor the Safe Medicine Disposal Program to allow for the safe disposal of unused and unwanted medications. To find the closest drop-off location to you, visit www.safemedicinedisposal.org or contact Susan Keach, Environmental Compliance Inspector, at 707.521.1820 or susan.keach@scwa.ca.gov. ●

Never Pour FOG Down Sink

You can do your part to help prevent sanitary sewer overflows by properly disposing of fats, oils and grease, referred to as "FOG".

FOG should never be poured down the drain because it can adhere to the insides of household and local sewer pipes, clog them and cause sewer backups, and/or overflows into the environment, and increased customer sewer rates to pay for sewer maintenance and plumbing repairs.



A sewer line clogged with fat and grease.

Your District provides FREE grease scrapers to help you keep FOG from going down the drain. Call the Water Agency Public Affairs Hotline at 707.524.6430. ●

Securing our Future by Investing in our Water Resources, Environment & Community

www.sonomacountywater.org

